

# Fairfax Center Phase II Working Group

## Meeting Minutes

July 7, 2015, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

### Attendance

Working Group: Sherry Fisher, Jeff Saxe, Vincent Picciano, Chris Grisafe, Sandria Lherisse, Jackie Bradley, Tony Wiley, Jeff Parnes, Mark McConn

Staff: Kim Rybold (DPZ), Ken Sorenson (DPZ), Marlae Schnare (Supervisor Herrity's office – Springfield District)

Planning Commissioner Nell Hurley, Braddock District

### Introduction

Staff provided an overview of the agenda for the evening, and each member of the Working Group introduced themselves.

### Study Overview

Kim Rybold, DPZ, began the presentation with some background information on the study purpose, process overview, and roles of staff and the Working Group. She presented a generalized process for Phase II of the study, with the main steps including education, vision, analysis, recommendations, and adoption of updated Plan text. She noted that the role of the Working Group will be to help revise the vision for the area so that it is reflective of the next 20-30 years. They will help develop scenarios to be tested and make recommendations to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. They will also be responsible for running the Working Group meetings and serve as a liaison to the larger community. Staff will provide support, technical analysis, and will also make recommendations to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Jeff Saxe asked a question to verify that staff would draft Plan text. Kim Rybold indicated that this is the case.

### Plan Background

Kim Rybold continued the presentation, highlighting how the Fairfax Center Area Plan is structured and some general history of the plan. She first presented the county's Concept for Future Development, explaining that the Fairfax Center Area contains one of the county's Suburban Centers. These are employment centers that contain a mix of uses, including office and housing, and are generally more intense than the surrounding Suburban Neighborhoods. She then introduced the original Fairfax Center Area plan, describing how the area was generally unbuilt at the time of the plan's adoption in 1982 but was well-located at the intersection of major roads, including Interstate 66 and Route 50. The vision was for an employment center with a core focused in the area of the Fair Oaks Mall. Site-specific Plan amendments have altered the original vision over time, but the overall implementation structure remains intact.

Vince Picciano and Chris Grisafe asked what makes a place a Suburban Center, and if there are any examples in the County. Kim Rybold pointed out other Suburban Centers in the county, including Merrifield, Dulles, and Lorton, noting that each Suburban Center has its own distinct characteristics.

Mark McConn pointed out that the Route 28 corridor has seen a significant change from planned office to residential uses.

Jeff Parnes commented that the rezoning of office to residential has occurred in Fairfax Center Area over time. Due to these changes, there are some areas that are not well-connected from a transportation standpoint to other nearby areas. Working Group members indicated that the study needs to look at transportation and its relation to land uses. The Working Group also discussed how the Government Center makes this area unique and has a need for housing.

Kim Rybold explained the implementation strategy for the Fairfax Center Area, which has relied upon an incentive-based structure to encourage the provision of needed infrastructure elements in the area. She noted that these development elements are a part of the rezoning process, measured using a checklist.

Jeff Saxe provided some feedback on the checklist, stating that over time he has found it seldom effective in ensuring quality development. He mainly attributed this to the equal weighting system among different development elements. He stated that the checklist should be an item that warrants serious consideration during the study.

Mark McConn indicated that Loudoun County has placed restrictions on new residential construction due to the costs to service new units. He highlighted the relationship of Loudoun County to the western part of Fairfax County.

Chris Grisafe asked if there is some measure that provides revenue estimates per land use.

Commissioner Hurley responded that there are numbers of the costs associated with residential. However, there are other variables that may change the numbers as residential units in different neighborhoods carry different student loads. She reiterated that the Working Group should be looking at the vision for the area with a 20-30 year view, rather than what is happening in neighboring areas and jurisdictions.

The Working Group resumed the discussion of the scope of consideration for external impacts and questioned the extent of external impacts. This included a discussion of schools, neighboring counties, as well as improvements to Interstate 66. Commissioner Hurley suggested that impacts of development in the City of Fairfax affect this area more directly, and that a City of Fairfax Representative be involved in the study process.

Jeff Saxe explained that most of the land in the Fairfax Center Area is developed and that he doesn't envision much redevelopment beyond the surface parking and office areas. This is probably limited to 100-200 acres at most.

Kim Rybold noted that other unique features of the Fairfax Center Area include Use Specific Performance Criteria that are appended to the Plan, as well as a road fund that helps provide private

sector funding for roadway improvements in the area. Jeff Parnes noted that a transportation financing committee was created after the initial Task Force process.

#### Existing Conditions

Kim Rybold briefly highlighted some of the existing conditions in the Fairfax Center Area. She noted that more residential units were constructed in the area than originally envisioned, and office use did not become as dominant. As a result, some roads have unused lanes, and many of the parks and schools serving the Fairfax Center Area are outside of its boundaries.

Mark McConn asked why the geographic area of the study has been narrowed so much. Commissioner Hurley explained that the county is divided into smaller planning areas since it would be difficult to examine everything at once.

Vince Picciano noted changing market needs and suggested that the vision includes a livability aspect that appeals to younger generations.

Tom Wiley agreed with Vince Picciano's statements and said he would like to see more connectivity between edge areas and the core, mainly through transportation connectivity.

#### Next Steps

Jeff Parnes requested that the Working Group discuss submissions; Kim Rybold indicated that a presentation of the submissions would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Commissioner Hurley mentioned the interchanges along Route 29 that had been discussed when staff met with the planning commissioners and the land use aides. Kim Rybold explained that funding had not been allocated to perform a transportation study that specific area, but that the submission could be taken into consideration during the vision portion of the study, providing input into the Fairfax County Department of Transportation's analysis.

Jeff Saxe suggested that staff should present some notable Plan amendments, such as those for Fairfax Corner and Fair Oaks Mall, as well as the existing Board-authorized Plan amendments, at the next meeting.

It was decided that Working Group members interested in serving as a co-chair or secretary would contact staff via email prior to the next meeting. Staff will send out instructions in a follow-up email that will also include a link to the evening's presentation.